

Routes to tour in Germany

The German Fairy Tale Route

German roads will get you there — even if nostalgia is your destination. On your next visit why not call to mind those halcyon childhood days when your mother or father told you fairy tales, maybe German ones? The surroundings in which our great fairy tale writers lived or the scenes in which the tales themselves were set will make their meaning even clearer and show you that many are based on a fairly realistic background.

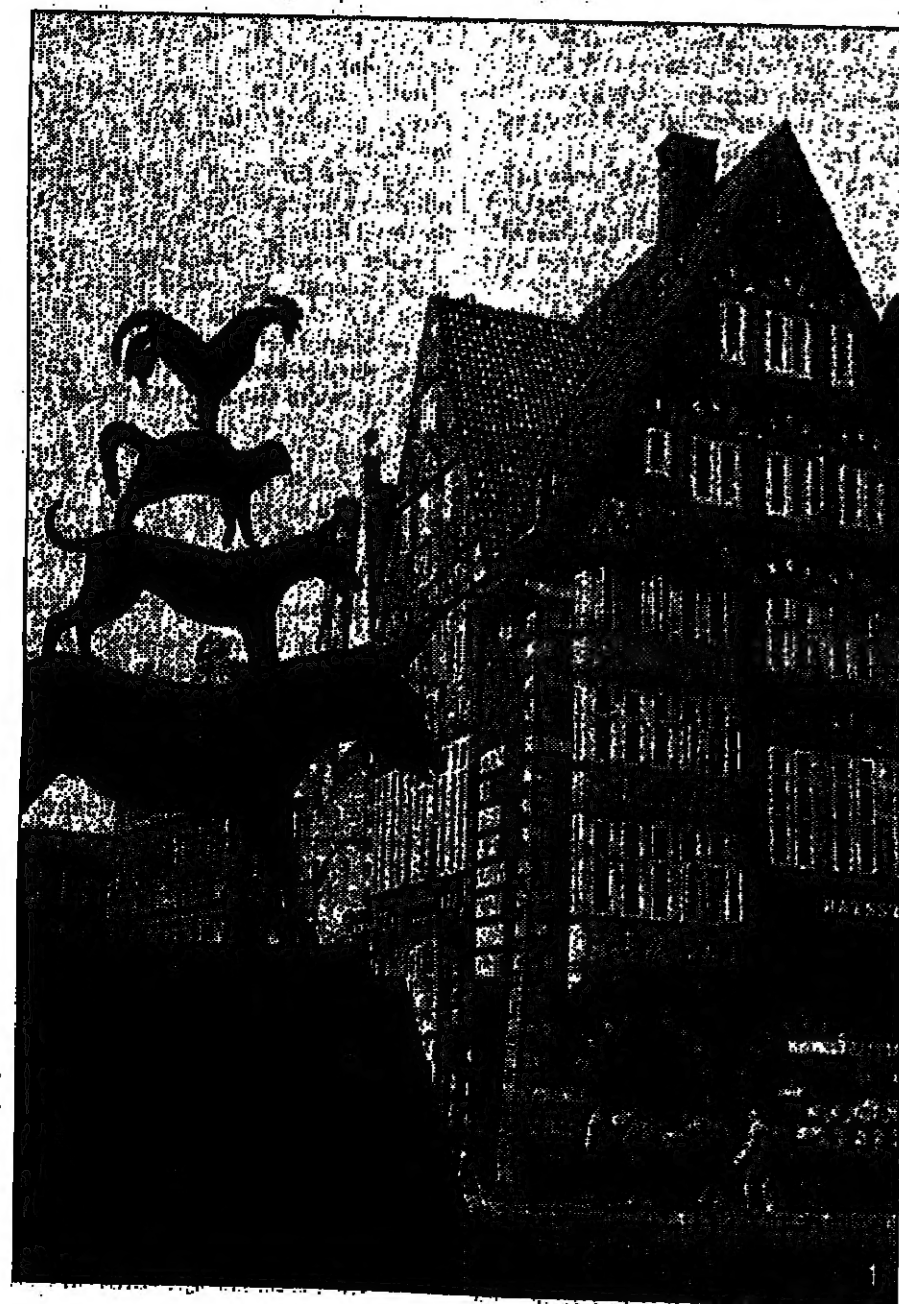
On a tour from Hanau, near Frankfurt, where the Brothers Grimm were born, to Bremen, where the Town Band (consisting of a donkey, a dog, a cat and a cockerel) played such dreadful music that it put even robbers to flight, you will enjoy the varying kinds of countryside. And do stop over at Bodenwerder. That was where Baron Münchhausen told his breathtaking lies.

Visit Germany and let the Fairy Tale Route be your guide.



- 1 Bremen
- 2 Bodenwerder, home of Münchhausen
- 3 Hanau, birthplace of the Brothers Grimm
- 4 Alsfeld

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Gromyko in Bonn for talks with Kohl

Breznev's death has reactivated East-West diplomacy. His successor, Yuri Andropov, is worth talking with, and this is a view President Reagan will no doubt share.

America will soon be preparing for next year's Presidential elections and Mr Reagan is sure to feel a summit meeting with the new Soviet leader will be useful for domestic consumption.

This should reassure Western Europeans worried about the trend in relations between Moscow and Washington.

Mr Gromyko's visit to Bonn started the ball rolling. Within a single week Moscow kept its options open regardless of who wins at the polls in the March general election.

The Soviet government has clearly held its fire on Christian Democratic Bonn Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

Yet days before Mr Gromyko's visit it gave the Opposition leader and Social Democratic Shadow Chancellor Hans-Jochen Vogel a sterling welcome in Moscow.

Herr Vogel in Moscow was clearly electioneering. The Kremlin lent him every encouragement without going so far as to snub the current Bonn government.

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So Soviet policy on Germany is astutely twin-track in character and in more ways than one. After visiting Bonn Mr Gromyko stopped over in East Berlin.

The visit paid by the Soviet Foreign Minister nonetheless testified to the importance the Soviet government continues to attach to the Federal Republic of Germany.

Bonn has been Moscow's foremost contact in the West ever since the Soviet Union has no longer been able to negotiate pragmatically with the United States, which in the Soviet view has been ever since the end of the Nixon-Kissinger era.

Soviet ties with Britain are at rock bottom, while President Mitterrand of France, with his mistrustful attitude toward the Soviet Union, has dispensed with the independent French *Ostpolitik* his predecessors favoured.

The French leader's outlook seems to combine domestic policy considerations and a personal dislike, but it looks as though ties with Paris may be under review.

France's Foreign Minister, Claude Cheysson, is to pay Moscow his first visit at the beginning of February.

Japan, finally, does good business with the Russians but keeps political ties to a diplomatic minimum.

Missiles were naturally the main item on the agenda during Mr Gromyko's visit to Bonn. Moscow was keen to push its view, wielding the stick and the carrot.

The carrot consisted of concessions if Bonn were to dispense with missile modernisation, coupled with the prospect of spectacular business deals.

The stick was the threat of counter-measures in the armaments sector, coupled with gloomy forecasts of a deterioration in ties.

Much of this was mere jawboning, but it seldom fails to have an effect on the Germans.



Foreign Minister Genscher welcoming Mr Gromyko to Bonn

(Photo: Sven Simon)

Arms control and the man

When the Bonn correspondent of the *New York Times*, John Vinocur, was posted to Paris his parting shot was a précis of his experiences in Germany.

One of his jibes at the Germans in a critical essay was that where America was concerned they tended to be notorious name-droppers.

Politically interested Germans may well list people they know in the United States but Mr Vinocur fails to realise that Germans are bound to be keen to know who thinks about them and contributes toward policy decisions on Germany in America.

US officials concerned with Germany and Central Europe may be a minor aspect of German-American ties, but here in Germany importance is attached to it.

Names such as those encountered among US arms control diplomats, Rostow, Staur, Nitze and Rowley for instance, have long been firmly established.

They are all experienced men. All know their Central Europe: it is where they hail from ancestrally. None of them can be suspected of harbouring illusions about the Soviet Union.

The men who will take over from them are half their age and from a generation that can be statistically shown to have very little idea of Europe.

They may be anti-communist in outlook but their views will thus not be as finely graduated as would be desirable for conducting negotiations.

So it is hardly surprising that the enforced resignation of Gen. Rostow has not been well received in the European Press.

The real reasons why he resigned are unclear. Senate right-wingers are known to have played a part, with their auspicious

Continued on page 2

Wörner upset by Congress

the purchase abroad of arms and equipment containing special metals.

Bonn Defence Minister Manfred Wörner is deeply disappointed and has harshly criticised the Congress decision.

He will have been thinking less in terms of the low level of current arms trading than of the virtual ban on future cooperation.

If the United States rules out all orders in return, be they ever so symbolic, Herr Wörner will find it difficult to persuade the Bundestag to approve arms purchases from America.

Yet many of the Bundeswehr's land, sea- and air-based missiles are US-manufactured, and there is no immediate alternative.

So Herr Wörner's criticism of the US is only secondarily tub-thumping for German economic interests.

He is evidently keen to prevent a decline in confidence in the United States that Germans may well come to feel if America continues in this way to attach greater priority to US economic interests than to NATO unity.

The US arms industry may be heedless of the political glass it has broken, but Congress, to which Herr Wörner has appealed, ought to show a greater sense of political responsibility.

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 15 January 1983)

WORLD AFFAIRS

Nato must live with its contradictions

President Reagan suspects that Warsaw Pact disarmament proposals outlined in the Prague Declaration are at least partly intended to sow the seeds of dissension between America and its allies in Western Europe.

So he is sending his Vice-President, George Bush, on a tour of Europe to show he feels close consultations with his Nato partners are a cornerstone of the Atlantic alliance.

Has the penny dropped in the White House? Dissension does not need first to be sown; it has long luxuriated, and partly because of far too much unpremeditated talk by leading members of the Reagan administration.

Like members of the Carter administration, they have said much that has had a serious bearing on the entire North Atlantic pact without having been dealt with beforehand in consultations with fellow-members of Nato.

It is clear that the forthright talk of a Brzezinski or a Weinberger, to name a particularly noteworthy hardliner in each of the two administrations, is bound to give rise to mistrust in Europe.

For geographical reasons alone there is a much more vital interest in coexistence and detente on this side of the Atlantic than in the United States, especially the west coast that is home to Mr Reagan and most of his associates.

A few months ago even the Nato C-in-C in Europe, General Bernard Rogers, voiced alarm about the initially shrill and militant tone of foreign policy rhetoric as used in Washington, and General Rogers is an American himself.

Yet even if leading Americans were in future to sound a note of greater moderation and to show signs of readiness and ability to compromise at the Geneva missile talks the tension and irritation that are so often apparent in dealings between Western Europe and its superpower these days would be no means have been eliminated.

Misunderstandings are too deep-seated on both sides, and clashes no-one would have dreamt of in 1949, when Nato was set up, have grown too serious.

Back in 1949 the Cold War ensured that the fronts were clear, while the absolute nuclear superiority enjoyed by the United States ensured a feeling of security that was totally unproblematic.

Besides, the Europeans in their war-ravaged countries felt it was a matter of course to allow the Americans the leading role.

They were economically powerful and, as Marshall aid clearly showed, willing to lend a helping hand.

Nowadays a sense of economic rivalry has emerged, intensified by the general crisis, and keywords such as 'steel and grain' are all that need be said to illustrate how the Nato countries are competing for sales markets.

By trying to impose an embargo on the Soviet gas pipeline deal with Western Europe the White House has even succeeded in impressing on the Europeans their common interests.

Clashes such as these stick out a mile, but the alliance is burdened no less heavily on both sides of the Atlantic by mutual

prejudice, with the Reagan administration merely making matters worse. Europeans have long tended somewhat disparagingly to look down on the Americans as lacking in civilisation and being too brash and given to using their elbows.

US budget planning aimed at thoroughly stripping welfare spending to boost military expenditure was all that was needed!

At the same time the average American, who as a rule is poorly briefed on world affairs, tends to see Western Europe increasingly as a gang of untrustworthy neutralists.

This view may have been amended since the appearance on the US domestic scene of an increasingly powerful nuclear freeze movement (at least among supporters of the freeze movement).

A further factor is that since the withdrawal from former colonial possessions and interests by Britain and France it has been increasingly up to the United States to assume the role of world policeman and take up cudgels against Soviet tendencies toward aggression.

So Elliot P. Cohen of Harvard says Nato is in a state of permanent crisis that seems sure to mean the end of the pact in its present structure sooner or later.

The treatment he recommends in an article printed simultaneously in *Foreign Affairs* and *Europe-Archiv* is for America, while maintaining its nuclear presence in Europe, to drastically thin out its troop strength on this side of the Atlantic.

That would enable the Americans to make troops available for boosting US commitments outside Nato's operational area.

He does not even rule out a helping hand from Washington in setting up Anglo-German or Anglo-French forces equipped with medium-range missiles.

But this would presuppose that Western Europe took its defence into its own hands at last.

These are ideas this writer feels are more likely to heighten the Atlantic dilemma than to resolve it.

Nato will have to live with its contradictions until such time as its members succeed in striking a common balance between military firmness and political flexibility.

The only way to resolve matters would be for Europeans to revert to integration and Americans to revert to moderation.

Felix Hartleb

(Nürnberg: Nachrichten, 11 January 1983)

Continued from page 1

clashes that the State Department is not sound enough on principles.

They were certainly to blame for the refusal to approve Mr Grey as Mr Ros-tow's deputy after his name had been put forward for nearly a year.

Secretary of State Shultz, a man in whom Europeans have confidence, says it is merely a matter of streamlining responsibilities for arms control.

This may be reassuring news but it does not entirely offset the detrimental effect of a reshuffle at this stage in the proceedings.

European observers are beginning to wonder whether President Reagan is still capable of heeding advice and how the struggle to gain his ear will progress.

Germans would be unlikely to devote much thought to US government appointments were it not that so much depended on them for their country.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 15 January 1983)

Genscher backs EEC security concept at Strasbourg

If we want to remain Germans, Italians, British or French, we will have to decide in time to become Europeans, Franz Josef Strauss wrote many years ago.

It was a view shared by Konrad Adenauer and reiterated in Bonn Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher's inaugural speech to the European Assembly in Strasbourg as chairman of the EEC Council of Ministers.

Herr Genscher dealt at length with the aim of a common security policy in this light.

"More depends on the success of this process of European integration than living standards," he said. "The future of our basic political order is at stake."

This reaffirmation of Bonn's commitment to the European idea was widely welcomed by the 434 elected Euro-MPs from the 10 Common Market countries.

British MEPs, Tories especially, of course, but Labour men too, wished Herr Genscher all the best, as chairman of the Council of Ministers for the first half of this year.

Even Rudi Arndt, a Social Democratic Euro-MP from Frankfurt, assured him of the support of the Socialist group at Strasbourg.

Herr Arndt was unable to resist the temptation to engage in a little election campaigning for German domestic consumption before offering Herr Genscher Socialist support.

At a time when there are differences of emphasis between America and Europe on security policy issues such as the Siberian gas pipeline contract or economic sanctions against the East, there must be no doubts as to Bonn's continued earnest on ties with the West.

Herr Genscher took good care to forestall any such impression with his statement.

He also said that a "strong and united Europe that clearly and constructively sees to its own interests in the alliance" would be a valuable and predictable partner for the United States during his chairmanship of the EEC.

It was worth noting, although scant notice was paid to it by the general public, that Herr Genscher as chairman of the European Community made a number of statements on security policy.

They were statements that must, by and large, have met with the approval of the other nine Common Market countries, otherwise he would not have been able to make them as chairman of the Council of Ministers.

They amounted to initial answers to the disarmament and arms control proposals made by the new Soviet leader, Mr Andropov, and the Warsaw Pact.

Herr Genscher has embarked on what might be termed a fog-clearing campaign in the security policy sector, especially in connection with talk of a treaty renouncing the use of force between Nato and the Warsaw Pact.

The value of any such treaty would be strictly limited, as an initiative launched by Otto von Habsburg, the German CSU Euro-MP, has shown at Strasbourg.

In 1940, when the Soviet Union, in league with Hitler, annexed the Baltic states it broke non-aggression pledges given to all three countries.

The 1920 peace treaties of Riga and Moscow guaranteed the stability of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian territory and everlasting friendship between the Soviet Union and all other states.

Continued Soviet occupation of Baltic states remained to this day a breach of the Helsinki CSCE Final Act.

Stalin's days may be over, but Warsaw Pact's offer of a treaty renouncing the use of force must not be allowed to distract attention from the issue that is really at stake.

The real problem is the lack of any military power in Europe. What the European Community for in foreign policy cooperation, which Helmut Kohl has persistently Genscher said, was arms control (it has that were in keeping with the principle of equality and parity).

The EEC has thus taken up for itself a role that is constantly used by the communist countries.

It has also rejected Mr Andropov's offer to simply reduce the Soviet arsenal to the number of Anglo-American missile systems: 162.

The nuclear armaments of Britain and France are, for one, less up-to-date than the SS-20. Anglo-French forces also have only one warhead.

The 162 Soviet SS-20 missiles, with a triple warhead, would have a payload of 486 nuclear devices, three times as many as British and French.

So there can be no question of Soviet offer entailing either equality or parity.

As an offer it is by no means entirely apart from the British and French nuclear deterrents not being intended for the defence of Europe.

Besides, they cannot be dealt with as the agenda of the Geneva missile talks, a legacy left behind by the until such time as Britain and France agree.

Herr Genscher told Euro-MPs while Bonn was in the chair no more would be left unturned in the battle to make headway toward European unity by means of a European Act.

This move was proposed two days ago by the German and Italian Foreign Ministers, Herr Genscher and Spadolini. Drafting a European security concept is a cornerstone of the idea of "Europe," Herr Genscher said at Strasbourg, "must not become an empty slogan; it must be a subject of an active response that came from common security and peace."

Hermann Böhm

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, 14 January 1983)

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GENERAL ELECTION

Credibility is Helmut Kohl's strong point

to discovering the secret of his success than he himself realised?

If there is anything that can explain the sympathy he effortlessly earned himself in foreign capitals, it can only be the fact that he represents a bit of German bourgeoisie that actually no longer exists.

Amid the toughness of today's policymaking and the brutality and disillusionment that go with it, something he still has to master, Kohl subconsciously symbolises to the nation the vestiges of nineteenth-century solid bourgeois dependability.

We have to journey far back in time to find these qualities. The journey takes us beyond Adenauer's republic that was struggling to find a suitable place in the fabric of things.

We have to journey beyond the Nazi regime (that dishonoured and crushed the best qualities of German bourgeois) and even beyond Weimar, an intellectualised and essentially non-bourgeois republic.

What is it that (at least at times over the past 200 years) earns this nation sympathy in the world even though Germany has never found it easy to make itself understood by other peoples?

Or, to put it cautiously and with a pinch of self-deprecation, what is it that the world dislikes least about us?

It is the Germany of solidity, a quality much maligned by misguided progressive elements. It is our somewhat romantic uprightness and perhaps also our rather well-read, somewhat priggish bourgeoisie.

Only such a Germany can hope to overcome its social decay and gain the confidence of the West, something the Federal Republic of Germany has been striving for with less than unqualified success.

Germany forfeited much of its credibility in the last years of the Schmidt

era, particularly in the United States. And credibility at home and abroad is Helmut Kohl's most important asset. He would be a nonentity if he were not credible and if he did not convey the certainty that he will always remain so. It is no coincidence that he got to where he is now: His future will depend on whether or not the electorate is imaginative enough to recognise the hidden motive force behind his rise, a rise that took time and had its setbacks. But less than two months before Germany goes to the polls in March it is still far removed from such a 'realpolitik' decision to call

the point is that the Germans have always found it difficult to pinpoint which of their qualities are seen as attractive and which are regarded as repellent.

It is a fact that the upright middle-class Helmut gets across better on the international stage than Helmut the Lipstick Interviewer Kohl drew attention to the fact that the idealism of Adenauer and Feilerbach was more deeply rooted in German consciousness than in people think.

Who knows, perhaps he came closer to discovering the secret of his success than he himself realised?

Helmut Kohl, who has always regarded himself (and repeatedly said in public) as a middle class man of the people, did not exactly seem the person to convey the German message to the world.

The point is that the Germans have always found it difficult to pinpoint which of their qualities are seen as attractive and which are regarded as repellent.

such early elections at the inopportune moment of a winter of recession has caused a great deal of confusion in the CDU camp.

But the campaign strategists have sound arguments with which to back up the decision. And if world opinion is anything to go by, it would have been unwise of Kohl to have cancelled the poll for whatever reason.

For no other Chancellor has a bourgeois personality make-up spelled the same moral obligation.

Self-discipline that demands more from oneself than from others, a hallmark of liberal conservatism, is an essential part of idealism's heritage, even at the risk of having to pay a prohibitive price to a misguided and not always perceptive public opinion.

Those who ridicule the willingness to take such a risk as amateurish nevertheless subconsciously realise the psychological effectiveness of such an attitude.

What Kohl will be doing is essentially to ask the electorate whether it is prepared to restore the civic virtues, for which the Germans were once lauded or whether it holds that it is already too late to revert to the political realism from which the nation has tried to escape in the past few years.

Kohl is confident he will win a majority for realism on 6 March.

But the directness with which he pursues this aim indicates his conviction that, should he lose, many things in this country would become irreversible for good.

Some Germans might fail to realise this. But those who look on this country from the outside are beginning to grasp it.

They watched developments in Bonn during the Schmidt era with rising concern, noting how Germany, which had ardently been integrated in the West, embarked on a foreign policy course of compromise with all the symptoms of overbearing self-assurance.

Even though the Germans might not have become fully aware of what happened to them with the change of government in Bonn, people abroad have.

This change has greatly helped to stabilise Nato and as a result of the change Bonn is once more pursuing a policy in keeping with its international weight.

Heinz Barth

(Die Welt, 12 January 1983)



President Reagan and Chancellor Kohl at the White House (Photo: Poly-Press)

All parties poised for campaign

Even before the President actually dissolved the Bundestag, the parties had named most of their constituency candidates, laid their campaign strategies and started a campaign about the campaign.

All parties will have to cope with an unaccustomed winter campaign. Another unaccustomed feature lies in the fact that the CSU is now also trying to project a "national" rather than purely Bavarian image.

But the CSU's cohesion in matters of manpower showed some cracks as it began its closed-door conference in Bad Reuth on 7 January.

The FDP's campaign kicked off with the party's traditional 6 January meeting in Stuttgart and a press conference given by FDP Secretary-General Irmgard Adam-Schwaezter.

The SPD will hold its campaign congress in Dortmund on 21 January when Shadow Chancellor Hans-Jochen Vogel has returned from his visits to Washington and Moscow.

All parties will have less money to spend than in 1980, though the FDP has already announced that it would not be "tight-fisted" since its parliamentary survival is at stake.

The SPD wants to spend only half the 1980 amount, and CDU general secretary Heiner Geissler has announced that his party will make do with DM29.8m. This is DM8m less than in 1980, which is to be offset by the advantage of being the party in power.

The CDU's main slogan will be "Work, Peace, Future - Together We'll Make It." Its campaign will be launched by a rally in Ludwigshafen to be addressed by leader Helmut Kohl and general secretary Geissler.

The first CDU advertisements hit the press on 10 January, and the first posters will be out on the 15th.

The pivotal point of the campaign is Kohl himself. The slogan here is: "This Chancellor Spells Confidence."

The slogan with which the CDU has homed in on the SPD is: "Unemployment, Debts, Bankruptcies - Not SPD Again."

But apart from using the media, the CDU also wants to step up personal discussions with its members and followers.

Like the SPD, the CDU will publish three topical campaign papers to reach every household (circulation 25 million).

Meanwhile, the campaign itself has become a campaign issue with the SPD going to the Constitutional Court in a bid to establish that the CDU has used government funds to promote its image in official government public relations work.

The CDU, on the other hand, accuses the SPD of rejecting a fair play agreement because it refuses to keep its campaign within a businesslike framework.

The fact is that all four Bundestag parties have welcomed a campaign agreement, though the SPD has rejected an arbitration committee similar to that of 1980, arguing that issues brought before the committee only added publicity to the defendant's case.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 7 January 1983)

POLITICS

Hans-Jochen Vogel does well in Washington

On his visit to Washington SPD Shadow Chancellor Hans-Jochen Vogel wanted to present himself as the man who has the better answers to the questions plaguing his fellow-citizens.

As his companion on the trip and fellow-Social Democrat Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski put it: "We have become more interesting to the Americans since the Hamburg election."

He was probably right, judging by the reception accorded to Vogel and his aides Egon Bahr, Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker and Wischnewski.

They were received by just about everybody who was anybody in Washington, from President Reagan and Secretary of State Shultz to Defence Secretary Weinberger, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the administration's top disarmament experts.

Acting on the spur of the moment, even former Secretary of State Alexander Haig, who has always shown great interest in Germany, joined the talks at one point.

Washington Post writers later said they had never known such a turnout of newsmen as at the press conference given by Vogel.

But the interest Washington showed in Hans-Jochen Vogel should not come as a surprise considering that, since the change of government in Bonn, Germany has been one of the few truly interesting foreign affairs topics in Europe.

The only thing that has outstripped it in reader interest has been the Bulgarian connection with the shooting of the Pope and routine reports on the marital bliss or otherwise of the British royal family.

The questions that occupy Washington's press are:

- Will the Germans swing to the left in the forthcoming election?
- Will the "Greens" take the place of the FDP as the junior coalition partner in a future Bonn government or are they not to be taken seriously as a political force?
- Was Genscher's shift from the SPD to the conservatives a lemming-like move?
- And who is this Hans-Jochen Vogel really?

Washington associates Germany's Social Democrats with such high-calibre names as Helmut Schmidt and Willy Brandt, whose reputations abroad are unmatched, promoted to some extent by the fact that both speak English fluently.

Vogel's English is a great deal better than that of Chancellor Kohl. And the ever-friendly and tolerant Americans appreciate it when a foreigner makes the effort to conduct discussions and interviews in a language other than his mother tongue.

In this somewhat arduous task Vogel acquitted himself splendidly, especially considering that it was not only the language that caused him trouble but also the topics of discussion.

After all, he has so far in his political career had nothing to do with missiles.

He was unable to come up with an answer to the one question that truly interested his hosts — or at least, the answer he did come up with did not satisfy them.

It was his attitude towards the de-

ployment in Germany of the new generation of intermediate range missiles later this year.

This crucial question that dominated his visit, along with the Geneva disarmament talks, could easily have distorted its perspective.

He could not even go so far as to assure the Americans that he was convinced they were seriously trying to achieve tangible results at the Geneva talks with the Soviets, thus making the deployment of the missiles redundant.

Had he done so, he would have been stripped of a very important campaign catchphrase that would clearly distinguish him from Helmut Kohl. Besides, he is not convinced of the Americans' earnestness on this score.

Though this has not been officially confirmed, there can be no doubt that Shultz, Weinberger and others asked Vogel whether he would follow through with his party's decision to deploy the new missiles by December should the Geneva talks break down.

In any event, giving such assurances would have run counter to his party's latest decision on the issue and probably also to his personal stance.

He was in a difficult position in Washington because his party is playing for time regarding American wishes and yet he had to bend over backwards not to offend his hosts.

It is this wait-and-see attitude on the part of the Social Democrats of the post-Schmidt era that distinguishes them from the conservatives.

If in doubt, a conservative Chancellor

would opt for the deployment of the missiles. Given the same doubt, an SPD Chancellor would refuse this if there were any chance that the Geneva talks could still succeed after the year's end deadline.

This being so, it is obvious whom the Americans would prefer to see as Chancellor. The formula Hans-Jochen Vogel finally came up with in Washington was that an SPD government in Bonn would review the two-track NATO decision (to deploy the missiles should talks provide no satisfactory results) in the light of the state of the Geneva negotiations in December.

That was seen by the Americans as being in breach of the decision. Asked whether the Americans had told Vogel bluntly that they would prefer a CDU Chancellor, one of the members of his entourage said that they had gone out of their way to avoid saying anything of this nature.

In fact, the visit was largely marked by evasive formulations. But there was also some straight talk. The chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Charles Percy, and some of his colleagues are bound to have been interested to learn how the Opposition in Germany assesses Moscow's latest disarmament proposals.

Since the German Social Democrats have always been interested in maintaining contacts with the other super-power Vogel was seen as a mediator



Shadow Chancellor Vogel and Secretary of State in Washington

between the two superpowers before the March general election.

This was a function Helmut Kohl did not assume until six years after coming Chancellor.

Vogel and his closest advisers working from nine till five. Times hard and shift working has definitely increased in the Federal Republic of Germany since the end of the war.

The only likelihood of a respite could be if business grew so bad that firms scrapped nights and worked only two shifts.

This came after Moscow had tentatively maintained that there was a proximate balance of power in Europe.

Vogel now expects Washington to respond to the Soviet overtures. He stated, some say with a coy smile, that his hosts had entrusted him with certain test balloons to be sent to Moscow.

Winfried M... (Stuttgarter Zeitung, 12 January 1983)

Vogel feted on visit to Moscow

the government (if it wished to be brief).

The same applies to his talks with Prime Minister Tikhonov, with whom he discussed the more practical aspects of German-Soviet ties.

Both Andropov and Tikhonov probably told him things he was bound to be pleased to hear.

Tikhonov spoke of more mammoth business deals along the lines of the natural gas for pipeline deal. He spoke of a coal liquefaction plant and a liquid gas deal.

Andropov evidently elaborated on the missile issue, intimating that Moscow was prepared to scrap some of its SS-20 missiles (instead of just shifting them further East).

He probably also provided some details on his proposal to keep his missiles arsenal in the European part of the Soviet Union at about the level of France's and Britain's.

Vogel asked him whether he meant the number of carriers or the number of warheads.

Another indication as to the importance the Kremlin attributed to Vogel's visit was the fact that a reception given by the German ambassador was so well attended.

There were not only by the Soviet leaders normally considered suitable for

LABOUR

EEC survey spells out the social and health problems of shift work

Shift work is on the increase, an EEC survey shows, and partly due to the union pressure for a shorter work-week.

It is by no means the only one, and the effects and ways of offsetting them are arguably more important.

After Merkle is a typical shift worker. His early shift is from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., his late shift from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. and his night shift from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

He works early one week, late the next and nights the third. He has been a shift worker for eight years and says it is a killer.

Either you drink coffee by the gallon or beer, otherwise you just can't stand it.

He doesn't stand much chance of working from nine till five. Times hard and shift working has definitely increased in the Federal Republic of Germany since the end of the war.

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Winfried M... (Stuttgarter Zeitung, 12 January 1983)



it nights twice a week or a regular system of rotation, including weekends, shift workers can seldom regularly attend, say evening classes.

That not only prevents them from following their hobbies and interests: it also virtually rules out any prospect of further education to graduate from shift work to something better.

The family is particularly hard-hit by shift work. It must either abandon hope of normal family life or adjust to the constant changes in daily routine of the shift worker in the family.

Mention is made of shift workers' wives who reheat meals more than once to feed their husbands and children and remind the children all day to be quiet while the breadwinner is trying to catch up with some sleep after a night shift.

Many wives are critical of shift work because they feel lonely during the nights in question, because loneliness causes anxiety and because they feel a heightened responsibility for bringing up the children.

The damage shift work does is not just social; it is medical too. No-one

Not for 50 years has unemployment in Germany been as high as last November, when 2,038,000 people were registered as out of work.

The international economic crisis is taking its toll just as it did in the late 1920s when, in November 1929, unemployment in Germany first topped two million.

Up till then the political situation was still reasonably stable. In the May 1929 Reichstag elections political extremists were more also-rans at either end of the political spectrum.

The Nazis polled only 2.6 per cent. But their support grew as unemployment spread.

By 1930 Hitler's party polled 18 per cent, and nearly one voter in three opted for either the Nazis or the Communists. In 1931 unemployment averaged four and a half million.

In the next general election, held in July 1932, the Nazis emerged as the largest party in the Reichstag. A majority of the electorate voted for either them or the Communists.

In January 1933 unemployment peaked and the Weimar Republic collapsed.

Once the Third Reich too was over and people set about rebuilding a democratic state in Germany the fear of unemployment remained very real, as sociologists showed time and again.

It was not just because unemployment was alarmingly high just after the Federal Republic of Germany was proclaimed.

Job security held pride of place over all other considerations among the working population even in the economic miracle years that followed, when unemployment declined steadily as time went by and the number of vacancies increased, heralding full employment.

A safe job outweighed everything else, including higher pay prospects. It

companies that plan shifts for any length of time are advised to draw up schedules for six months at a time and staff to plan their private lives a longer period.

can sleep as soundly or as undisturbed by day as at night.

Even when shift cycles last longer the body still does not adjust to the new rhythm. Body temperature, for instance, remains lowest at night.

That means not only shortfalls in sleep and output: it also makes shift workers more susceptible to certain complaints.

The family naturally suffers from the side-effects of not getting enough sleep regularly, which are general irritability and bad humour.

So why work shifts? Firms say they need to work shifts to recoup capital invested by making the most use of plant and equipment.

But few figures are available to prove the point. It is fairly easy to work out the wage costs of an extra shift, but other financial aspects, such as higher maintenance costs of machinery that runs 24 hours a day instead of eight, are much more difficult to assess.

One point that is never quantified is the performance shortfall during night shifts and its repercussions on the quality of goods produced.

Scientists set workers reaction tests. The number of mistakes they made increased with each successive night shift, whereas the failure rate was constant

when tests were conducted during the early shift.

As for the "cost" of recovering from a night shift, that is a bill each worker pays individually. Shift workers say they spend much of their leisure time recovering from work.

More frequent sickness or early retirement cost hard cash, but the cost is met by society as a whole via health insurance and pension funds.

Companies pay their contribution toward social security schemes, but they are not in a position to assess the cost to any great extent from their balance sheets, the survey says.

So the foundation suggests setting up a health care system toward which companies contribute in relation to the use made of it by their staff.

Managements would then, it feels, be duty bound to improve medical care and working conditions; they would also be able to justify this interest to their shareholders.

The foundation is well aware that night work cannot be abolished in all walks of life, but it strongly recommends cutting it to a minimum between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m.

These are working hours for two and a half million people in the Federal Republic of Germany at any given time.

The detrimental effect of working irregular hours and its repercussions on health and social life could be partly offset, the survey says, by:

- using extra staff during shift work;
- early retirement;
- shorter working hours;
- and reducing shift work to a limited number of years in one's working life.

Michael Petersen (Stuttgarter Zeitung, 12 January 1983)

Job security as seen at shipyard

was an expression of the desire for social security felt by those who have nothing to sell but their labour.

Job security is what they most need to be able to plan their lives and those of their families.

Even in and on the way to a booming economy it remained the linchpin of relations between gainful employment and society.

So it is surprising how slight the reaction so far to the return of unemployment has been.

In 1975, for the first time in 20 years, unemployment averaged over a million again. There was a slight improvement at the end of the 1970s but it was only temporary.

High birth-rate years are now hitting a labour market already depressed by the general economic recession. That is the position in the 1980s.

A growth rate of between five and six per cent would be needed to return to full employment. In current conditions that seems virtually inconceivable.

Coping with this particular crisis is the foremost task politicians face, and *Rationalisierung, Krise, Arbeiter*, a survey by Michael Schumann, merits special attention.

Schumann is one of Germany's leading industrial sociologists and head of the Sociological Research Institute, Göttingen.

He and his associates set out in the mid-1970s to study humanisation of the

working world in the shipbuilding industry.

Their aim was to probe changes in industrial work from the viewpoint of both capital, in other words the management, and labour, both as individuals and as producers.

The brief alone is interesting enough. The reader is given a detailed analysis of approaches to rationalisation in two shipyards that sought to solve their difficulties in different ways.

There is then an intelligent look at the consequences of rationalisation

Michael Schumann / Edgar Einemann / Christa Siebel-Rebell / Klaus P. Wittemann: *Rationalisierung, Krise, Arbeiter. Eine empirische Untersuchung der Industrialisierung auf der Werk (Rationalisation, Crisis, Workers. An empirical survey of industrialisation in shipbuilding)*, published by Europäische Verlagsanstalt, Frankfurt am Main 1982, 577pp, DM58.-

from the viewpoint of shipyard workers. Growing mastery of the production process leads to a reduction in physical and mental demands on the work force, but it also opens up unprecedented opportunities of boosting productivity.

This pressure as a rule more than offsets the advantages of the technical revolution at work. Many workers claim from experience that technical and organisational change at work runs counter to their interests.

So they do not expect much to come of policies aimed at humanising the working world.

The Göttingen sociologists probed not only the crisis of humanisation; in 1977 and 1978 they unwittingly witness-

Continued on page 8

Germany's economic expectations for 1983 are modest. This is due in part to widespread uncertainty over the outcome of the March general election, an uncertainty that is delaying investment.

Even so, a number of German firms ordered capital goods such as machinery, cranes and so on before the year's end to benefit from the ten-per-cent government investment subsidy.

But many of these orders stipulate that they can be cancelled after the March elections.

Companies that have long been operating below capacity and are in the red as a result are hanging on, hoping for better days.

Some major corporations, like Arbed Saarstahl, are kept going with government assistance.

As an experienced banker recently put it, the general election will mark the moment of truth.

It is certain that there will be more insolvencies and that more jobs will be lost if things don't improve soon.

The predictions of professional forecasters are gloomy. They all anticipate a further decline in GNP of between 0.5 and 2 per cent.

But it must be borne in mind that our starting position is extremely poor. The new Bonn government took over at a point where only the reverse gear was still operational.

The country guzzled ever more fuel in the form of public debt and sped into recession at ever-increasing speed.

Still, the overall conditions for an upturn have improved. Fiscal policy has charted the right course towards putting Federal finances back on an even keel.

Even though balancing public sector budgets, especially welfare spending, is

ECONOMY

Prospects promising but investors wait and see

likely to take a decade, Bonn has at least begun to restructure government spending in terms of less consumption and more investment.

The positive effects of the new fiscal policy on the money market are already in evidence.

On the other hand, the public discussion about a possible increase of the maximum rate of income tax from 56 to 60 per cent naturally dampens the prospects of an upswing.

The conservatives should stick to the recommendations they made while in opposition and provide more social and economic justice by being less chary of cutting subsidies for obsolete and no longer competitive companies and by making government benefits subject to incomes below a certain level.

Here, the reduction of child allowances marks a first, though much too timid, step. Another must be to reform the tax system as soon as possible.

A new and sustained economic upturn will depend on a lasting improvement of the framework conditions for business.

The Bonn government has already taken a few steps in the right direction aimed at revitalising the economy, reducing unemployment and balancing the budget.

But where are the politicians willing

to criss-cross the country and explain the new policy to the people?

Instead of going to the people, the Bonn government keeps talking things into the ground to the point where much of what it plans becomes unintelligible to the citizen, like the liberalisation of the rent laws and relief from local taxes.

Opposition slogans like "Distributing Wealth from the Poor to the Rich" only sow uncertainty among workers and consumers. The same applies to the constant and confusing discussion about new tax rates.

Conditions for an upturn are more favourable now than they were a year ago. Interest rates have gone down markedly, helping primarily the construction industry.

Here, the long slump seems to be over as demand rises and a wide range of businesses supplying the construction industry, such as commercial vehicle makers and various artisan firms, are bound to benefit.

Cheaper money promotes investments by making them more feasible in terms of returns, the more so as the gap between returns on investments in security markets and investments in plant and equipment is shrinking.

Moreover, there is also a possibility that householders will rethink and opt for less saving and more consumption.

The Deutschmark is also gaining in stability, its exchange rate against the dollar having risen by five per cent in four weeks.

This means that the bill for oil and commodity imports will go down by several billion Deutschmarks.

To enhance this still further, the Opec list price of \$34 per barrel cannot be maintained and the actual price paid now is more in the region of \$30 or even slightly less. Prices of heating oil and car fuel are dropping.

As things stand at the moment, the Deutschmark is certain to be revalued within the European Monetary System (EMS) in weeks rather than months.

All this will have a highly positive effect on the inflation rate, which is likely to drop below four per cent in the next few months.

This low inflation rate should make it easier for the parties to collective bargaining to arrive at moderate pay deals for this year.

The pay hikes in industry could work out at about three per cent and in the public sector at around two per cent. But it is unlikely that these deals will be clinched before the 6 March election.

The fact is that moderate pay deals are more important than anything else in getting the economy back on its feet.

What is needed is a pact between economic and social common sense that must include everybody. Forgoing exaggerated demands for a short while could result in a medium- and long-term gain and full employment once more.

There is also a reasonable chance that the world recession will be over come this year. Business seems to be on the verge of picking up in the USA and forecasts for this year speak of two- to three-per-cent growth in real terms.

This cannot fail to have positive effects.

Continued on page 7

Poised for upswing, Bonn says

The Bonn Economic Affairs Minister thinks the economy has reached its nadir towards the end of 1982 and is now poised for an upswing.

Both the influx of orders, seen as early indicators, and the generally brighter outlook of the community seem to indicate that economic performance this year will be better than last.

Even so, the Ministry's annual report (likely to be released in January) will probably forecast a change in GNP (adjusted for inflation) against 1982.

The draft report, which is final at this stage, forecasts a four per cent increase in GNP for 1983 and an inflation rate of four per cent. This largely accords with the assumptions underlying the budget.

If the Ministry follows its forecast for the report with its projections for growth, prices and employment, economic institutions will be satisfied.

This will be followed by a few days of separate consultations with representatives of labour and management.

Due to his campaign commitments, the Minister is unlikely to be in Bonn any longer. But the treatment given to Vogel by the Minister is likely to be a Social Democratic government at the helm in Bonn.

A public sector economic plan, consisting of representatives of federal, state and municipal governments, is due to coordinate spending plans in January.

Due to the marked economic recovery in the third quarter of last year, the Ministry expects the economy to likely to close with a 1.5 per cent increase in GNP.

If no economic impulses ever were to be imparted, there would be a further decline of 1.5 per cent in GNP.

The assumed zero growth for 1982 therefore contains a clear growth element in the second half of the year.

Ministry experts base their optimistic assessment on the increase in industrial demand in the last few months.

At first it seemed as if the 10 per cent increase in the influx of orders entirely due to government loan subsidies applying only until the end of 1982.

But closer analysis showed that orders were not only capital goods but also consumer goods as well. They came from both Germany and abroad and were extremely wide in range.

The great unknown quantity is the future developments in the March general election.

The 'wait-and-see' attitude of the community could become more pronounced as the results of opinion polls come out, but even so, the Ministry holds a number of important indicators for a clear improvement.

They include declining interest rates, a balanced current account, stable commodity prices and government incentives, particularly for the construction industry.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 11 January 1983)

INDUSTRY

Steelmaker Willy Korf calls in receiver

Korf Industrie und Handel, the parent company of the Korf Steel Group, has asked for a court receiver to liquidate it from its creditors.

In a statement released at its Baden-Baden head office the company attributed the decision to "growing liquidity problems that are affecting not only Korf group but wide sectors of the German steel industry."

Only a few years ago, on 13 August 1979, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Industry, Khalid bin Abdulaziz, visited Willy Korf's 50th birthday.

Part of the text went roughly like this: "Dear friend Willy, whatever your age, I'll always be making steel."

A year later, when the Korf group celebrated its 25th anniversary, Lothar Böhle, Baden-Württemberg Prime Minister, said Korf's recipe for success was to convert new ideas into genuine investments.

Now, Willy Korf (nicknamed Willy Vogel in Moscow)

Vogel in Moscow

Continued from page 4

in Moscow was that he was going to talk to the Russian Minister of Heavy Industry while in Bonn anyway. But the treatment given to Vogel by the Minister is likely to be a Social Democratic government at the helm in Bonn.

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(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 11 January 1983)

Continued from page 6

on the world economy as a whole, especially as a number of other industrial countries, among them Britain, seem to be poised for an upturn.

The vaunted collapse of the world financial system won't materialise because governments, central banks and international institutions have proved now that they can cope with even the trickiest of over-indebtedness such as Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and some East European countries.

Their rescheduling operations are a major contribution towards a global economic upturn and towards stemming protectionism, a spreading scourge these days.

Friedhelm Oist (Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, 7 January 1983)

struction business which Korf operates in partnership with Austria's state-owned Voest-Alpine. But nobody knows whether the gains here will be enough to pull the group out of the mire.

Korf, father of two, is equally fond of grand parties and grand words. Essentially a tough go-getter, he subscribes more to classical liberalism than to the social market economy.

Many a bottle of champagne is likely to have been drunk in celebration by his competitors when news was received on 7 January that Korf had to ask the court to protect him from his creditors.

The fact that this coincided with the last meeting in Düsseldorf of a government-appointed panel of three experts to hammer out a plan that would put the steel industry back on an even keel might or might not be pure chance.

Korf's golden decade was during the boom years from 1965 to 1975.

His breakthrough came in the late 1960s when he obtained the licence for a new steel production technique, the Midrex direct reduction process that made it possible to bypass costly blast furnaces in steel production.

In 1969 Korf built his first Midrex steel mill in the USA. This was followed in 1972 by a second one in Hamburg. Today, his group includes 40 plants on both sides of the Atlantic with an annual output of 20 million tons.

Since the Midrex process uses natural gas as fuel, business flourished as long as gas was cheap. But things became increasingly difficult as the price of gas rose.

In retrospect, Kuwait's 30-per-cent shareholding in the Korf group (it dates back to 1975 but did not become known until 1978) appears in a different light than as seen originally.

Korf apparently lived up to his principle of finding financiers without relinquishing control.

In any event, the group's liquid assets never really stretched far enough. If preliminary calculations are correct, the



Willy Korf
(Photo: Wolf Prange)

steel part of the group (excluding plant construction) owns only 13.5 per cent of its assets outright; too much to die and too little to live on.

Germany's steel industry with its payroll of 250,000 now pins its hopes on Bonn and the rescue plan to be presented by the panel of three. In all likelihood, Korf will figure in their scheme of things.

The three experts are Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen, Allianz Insurance's Marcus Blerich and Veba's Günter Vogelsang.

What has happened to Korf could happen to other steelmakers as well considering the straits in which the industry finds itself.

The crisis has lasted since 1974 and cost the steelmakers billions. And despite EEC efforts at crisis management neither prices nor sales have been right since 1980.

Last summer the situation deteriorated still further although, paradoxically, nobody really knows why.

Leonhard Spelthorff (Hannoversche Allgemeine, 12 January 1983)

Mannesmann's Egon Overbeck steps down



Egon Overbeck
(Photo: Sven Simon)

He was appointed chairman of the Mannesmann board in October 1962.

At that time, the top man at Mannesmann, Wilhelm Zangon, said about his

concept for the new chairman: "He should be young enough to plan over a long period and to be around to make good his management mistakes."

Overbeck met this qualification in an exemplary fashion. Under his management the former coal and steel company developed into the world's largest maker of steel pipes, gearing steel production entirely to pipe requirements.

It was also under his management that Mannesmann diversified in a big way, going into plant and machinery (Demag) and hydraulics (Rexroth).

This has helped to equalise within one company the differences in performance of various branches of industry and has ensured that the 185,000 Mannesmann stockholders were paid healthy dividends.

This road is to be continued by developing Mannesmann into what can best be summed up as a technology concern.

At a point already past the zenith of his career, Overbeck went into communications and information technology by buying an additional sales potential of DM2.5bn, one-sixth of group sales.

Asked whether labour co-determination in coal and steel, which he had courage enough to criticise publicly, had hampered him, Egon Overbeck said:

"Not so far as the final results were concerned; but it would certainly have been easier to achieve these results without it."

J. Gehlhoff (Die Welt, 10 January 1983)

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■ JUSTICE

Nazi trials
still pose
problems

Süddeutsche Zeitung

Dortmund public prosecutor Hermann Weissing, whose job is to prepare and conduct trials of Nazi war crime suspects, is not a man to be envied.

A case that has been under investigation for a quarter of a century was closed but for yet another appeal just before Christmas.

In many ways it is typical of his work. It has certainly put him as the prosecution counsel on the spot.

Wilhelm Westerheide, 73, and Johannes Zelle, 63, were accused of murder in a ghetto in the German-occupied Ukraine in 1942.

In the first court, in Bielefeld, they were found not guilty. Weissing appealed to the Supreme Court in Karlsruhe, which ordered a retrial.

At the second trial, in Dortmund, Weissing himself had to ask for the charges to be dropped because, he felt, they no longer held water.

Yet when the second court found in favour of the accused Weissing lodged a further appeal, allegedly having been advised to do so by the Justice Ministry and the Foreign Office.

He is perfectly at home in the legal routine such cases involve, but the proceedings against Herr Westerheide and Frau Zelle have given him no joy whatever.

In his job he often has the feeling that someone who is definitely guilty has got off scot-free. "It was him alright," he thinks.

But he reminds himself that sentences such as this were nine points of the law in the Third Reich and it is infinitely better to abide by the law as it stands.

Even so, there are times such as during the case under review when, after months of evidence and cross-examination, he reluctantly sees, no alternative but to call for the charges to be dropped.

Charges were preferred against Westerheide and Zelle over 20 years ago but, as seems to be the rule in Nazi war crimes trials, it took unaccountably long for proceedings to get under way.

They were not tried until 1979, when they were found not guilty by a Bielefeld court. As prosecution counsel Herr Weissing had called for life imprisonment for them both.

He felt sure he had a clear case that the accused, who were responsible for the murder of thousands of Jews in Vladimir Volynsk in 1942.

Westerheide, he was convinced, had shot two Jews personally, while Fräulein Hanne, his secretary was known at the time, had killed a child of two singlehandedly.

She had tied its feet together and smashed its little body head-first against a wall.

The Bielefeld court heard nearly 100 witnesses to gain a clearer idea of what life had been like in Vladimir Volynsk under Nazi occupation.

Westerheide as regional commissio-

ner and head of the civil administration was "both God and the Tsar," as a Russian witness put it.

Wherever he appeared, on horseback, he spread a feeling of horror. One survivor is on record as having told Israeli officials that Westerheide personally distinguished between two categories of Jews, the useless and the specialists.

He made the selection himself and ensured that the ghetto of the useless Jews was destroyed first. Fräulein Hanne lent a hand, always brandishing a whip when visiting the ghetto.

Observers felt the Bielefeld verdict was a disgrace. Herr Weissing must have done too; he appealed to Karlsruhe for a retrial.

Seldom has the Supreme Court so frankly accused a lower court of negligence. It ruled that the Bielefeld court had not even clarified whether the Jews mentioned by the prosecution had in fact been killed.

Some of the court's findings were felt to be so unrealistic and improbable as not to be worth considering.

The Bielefeld bench had held, for instance, that although Westerheide had shouted and gesticulated wildly while the ghetto-dwellers were being rounded up for extermination he might have done so for reasons that had no bearing on the offence of which he was accused.

He might, the court found, merely have been trying to make himself out to be important.

Herr Weissing is gratified that Karlsruhe agreed that a retrial was essential. It was held in Dortmund and lasted eight months.

When the case ended, just before Christmas, the accused had not spent a single day on remand and Weissing himself had called for the charges to be dropped.

Important witnesses had died. Others were no longer prepared to appear in the box. Others were felt by the court, and the prosecution, to have contradicted themselves.

Grave contradictions

Weissing felt crucial evidence no longer rang true even though the witnesses were keen to tell the truth. Two witnesses, he was convinced, were not reliable.

Grave contradictions came to light in connection with the murdered child. It was certainly murdered. Its death was seen by three witnesses, but seems likely to go unatoned.

Other public prosecutors don't envy Weissing his job. Some suspect he is "under orders" to lodge an appeal against the Dortmund findings.

The case is said to have prompted interest in high quarters, at the Justice Ministry and the Foreign Office.

Herr Weissing says the decision to appeal was his. He has yet to make a written submission but says that the court finding the accused not guilty on his recommendation could only be "most superficially" be regarded as a success.

He seems to hope there may turn out to have been procedural errors.

A Foreign Office connection seems more than likely now that Israel's Foreign Minister, Moshe Nessim, has told Knesset MP Shevach Weiss the state of Israel is in a position to supply further documents and witnesses.

The claim that the evidence was insufficient for a conviction seems to rest on shaky foundations.

Gerd Kröncke
(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 10 January 1983)

Call for Volksgerichtshof
sentences to be voided

An SPD bid to have sentences passed by the Nazi Volksgerichtshof, or People's Court, declared null and void has been rejected by Bonn Justice Minister Hans Engelhard.

Herr Engelhard, a Free Democrat, argues that such a drastic step is unnecessary, although the Berlin court undeniably passed disgraceful sentences.

In 1943 a woman was sentenced to death for telling a joke. She worked as a draftsman and had told the joke to a solitary workmate.

Hitler and Goering, the joke ran, were on the top of the Berlin Radio Tower. When the Führer said he would like to give the people of Berlin pleasure Goering said: "Why not jump?"

This feeble joke, along with having told several Czech workers to split up and not form a group in public, took her to the guillotine.

It was only one of many pointless death sentences passed by a court that is back in the news now the Social Democrats have called for its sentences to be declared null and void.

Forget about the law, Goebbels told the Volksgerichtshof in 1942. What matters is the decision that the man must go.

That was exactly what the court was set up to do. Its role was to destroy opponents of the Nazi regime, and specially selected judges were appointed to ensure this was done.

Roland Freisler, the court's second chief justice, said its sentences were a constant process of national self-cleansing.

He was particularly keen on cleanliness. During his tenure, from 1942 to 1944, the number of death sentences increased drastically.

Judge Thierack, his predecessor, had passed between 32 and 102 death sentences a year. Freisler's count was between 1,192 and 2,097.

In 1944 death sentences were handed out in nearly one case in two.

The court was set up in 1934 because the Nazis were irked at the Reich Supreme Court finding four alleged Reichstag arsonists not guilty for lack of proof.

One might have expected the SPD motion to have been welcomed in Bonn, but Justice Minister Engelhard ruled out the idea of declaring all Volksgerichtshof sentences null and void.

He said that in 1946 or 1947 they had either been declared null and void or repealed on application.

If the Bundestag were to declare sentences null and void now it would convey the impression that the Federal Republic of Germany had done nothing about them for over 30 years.

The Social Democrats fear this is exactly what has happened. In some cases, says SPD Bundestag member Gernot Fischer, applications were not made.

The Justice Ministry claims not a single Volksgerichtshof sentence is still valid.

But this is not the point. The issue at stake involves one of the darkest aspects of post-war legal history in Germany.

If all sentences by the court were declared null and void the Volksgerichtshof would no longer qualify as a bona

fide court and its judges would be liable to criminal proceedings.

Fifty-two of the 574 judges known still to be alive, aged between 82 and 88, and they are still entitled to the bench's privilege.

They and the public prosecutor, virtually safe from prosecution, judges as a result of a highly unusual ruling by the Karlsruhe Court in 1968.

It was given in connection with Hans-Jürgen Rehse, a Volksgerichtshof judge who passed 231 death sentences. Karlsruhe said the Nazi court's regular court that passed sentences in accordance with the law as it stood at the time.

This meant that the accused only be brought to book for disregarding the law and administering a death sentence against knowledge and for ulterior motives.

Rehse was found not guilty a year later during the appeal proceedings.

After this problematic ruling the Federal Supreme Court the Bundesgerichtshof lost heart and decided to prefer charges against former Volksgerichtshof judges.

How could a judge be shown to have felt his judgment was right for the time? Besides, only murder counts counted. The statute of limitations applied to homicide since 1960.

The Karlsruhe ruling and the action felt by public prosecutors to bring a case against Rehse.

West German courts have judgment in 6,115 cases of Nazi war crimes, but not a single member of the Volksgerichtshof has been tried.

Most former court officials have normal lives and carried on in their profession, some as leading lawyers, members of the bench.

In October 1979 the Berlin prosecutor's office was ordered to resume investigations by West Justice Senator Gerhard M. Meyer, a Free Democrat.

It will be some years before facts are available to prefer charges and it remains to be seen whether they are preferred and sentences passed.

If it were up to the Bonn Justice Ministry the prospects would be bright. Herr Engelhard says he has no intention of condemning the work of the Volksgerichtshof out of hand.

The Court passed sentences guilty in some cases and in others judgments in strict accordance with constitutional principles, says Hugo Klein, parliamentary state secretary to the Ministry.

This is a dubious line of argument. Can an institution that is under orders to pass death sentences whose carefully selected and motivated judges passed death sentences in assembly line fashion also be independent court and issue verdicts in accordance with constitutional principles?

No it can't, says the SPD, but the Social Democrats, like the other parties, have shown scant interest in the case for decades, only now taking it up.

Jörn G. Praeger
(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 8 January 1983)

SHIPBUILDING

Workers are worried in
an ailing industry

Hannoversche Allgemeine

A room-laden graffiti such as "The End is Nigh" line the wall of the staircase to the works council's office at the Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft (HDW) shipyards in Hamburg.

Works council chairman Holger Mahler, who was expelled by the trade union, IG Metall, just over a year ago, is running against official candidates in the 1981 works council elections, says morale is low.

Many have been on short shifts for some time, and that isn't all that has not families reeling, Mahler says. They miss the overtime pay that used to be hard-earned now worries them less.

Prospects for the yard's future. The new managing director, Claus Ahlers, is shortly to submit to the supervisory board a new concept for the shipyard in Kiel and Kiel shipyards.

Herr Ahlers took over at the HDW from Norbert Henke, who had been in charge of the shipyard in Bremen. He is now in charge of the shipyard in Kiel.

The Hamburg works council does not know the details of Herr Ahlers' plans. He is worried that HDW's Hamburg yard will be hardest-hit.

There are rumours that 2,000 men with high salary- and wage-earners are to be sacked and shipbuilding operations cut down entirely in Hamburg.

No more new ships would be built, says Otto vom Steeg, IG Metall's regional secretary, "would not survive any length of time."

Politicians promise everything will be done to ensure that new ships continue to be built in Hamburg. HDW shipyard workers have long grown mistrustful of such assurances.

The Bonn government and Schleswig-Holstein merged Howaldtswerke in Kiel and Deutsche Werft in Hamburg in the late 1960s.

Together they were the largest shipbuilding group in the country, and workers still believed promises of a golden age for the industry.

Not long afterwards the Finkenwerder shipyard in Hamburg was shut down. People continued to hope, although many were unhappy and uneasy.

Company policy seemed promising though the oil crisis was followed by a crisis in the shipbuilding industry.

Instead, from the mid-1970s, HDW went steadily downhill, interrupted only by small spurts of better business. The company exhausted reserves.

The only expectations exceeded were that losses were far heavier than expected. In the past four years they have totalled several hundred million marks.

What progressively upset people in Hamburg was that activities were increasingly concentrated in Kiel. HDW

Hamburg used to have a payroll of 11,000; only 4,670 remain.

Kiel used to employ 9,885, of which 7,257 still exist. New ships are now built virtually only in Kiel, with increasing emphasis on warships, as is the case in all major shipyards.

The closure of Finkenwerder was followed by that of the Reierstieg yard. Only the Ross yard is still going in Hamburg.

It is building a single new ship that is due for completion in June. An off-shore module is also being built, ordered by a Danish company.

But that is it. Otherwise orders consist of repairs, and not even anything spectacular by way of a refit. The workers are worried.

They are worried at all major shipyards, at Blohm & Voss in Hamburg and at Vulkan in Bremen, where shareholders have been asked to write off a percentage of their capital holding to keep the company going.

Prospects look just as gloomy at AG Weser in Bremen and Thyssen in Emden. At several yards there have been protest strikes against rationalisation plans.

North German shipyard workers were strongly represented at the big trade union demonstrations against Bonn economy measures.

Well they might. Hopes that the world economy would recover in the early-1980s, and with it shipping and shipbuilding, have been dashed. The opposite is the case.

In tankers, for instance, there are over 100 million tons surplus to demand. About 80 million tons have been put out to graze, many being scrapped.

The situation is little better among bulk freighters, where about a third of tonnage is superfluous. Here too ships are being put out to graze in the hope of better days to come.

International shipbuilding conditions are unchanged, with low-wage or heavily-subsidised yards continuing to build ships more cheaply.

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ed a shipbuilding crisis in the wake of the tanker boom's collapse.

The final section of the book deals with shipyard workers' reactions to redundancies and the shipbuilding crisis as a foretaste of current problems and problems to come.

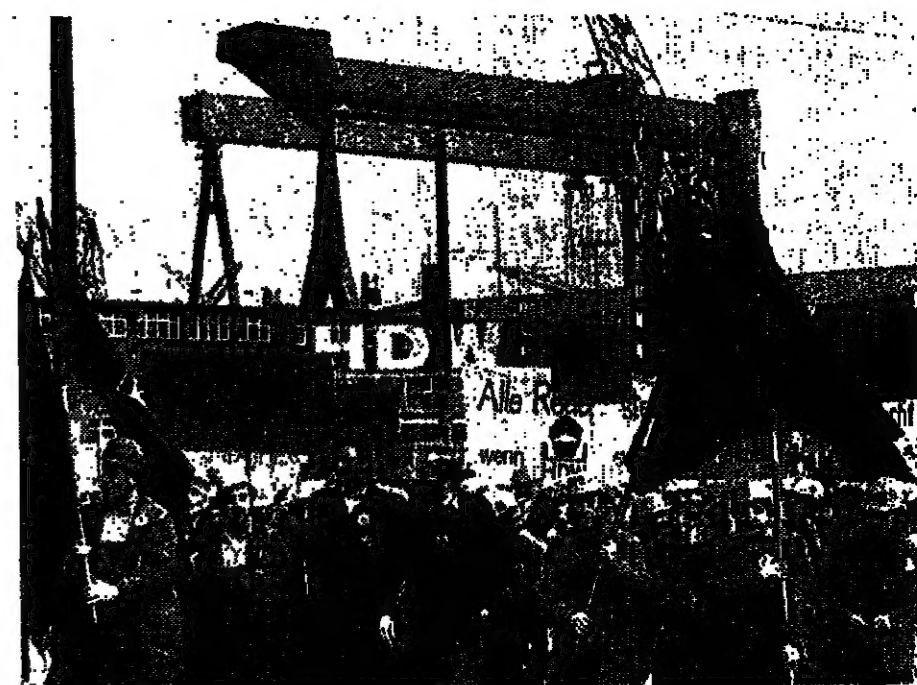
It used to be widely held that full employment and a steady increase in earnings had made people insistent on earning more and more.

This outlook alone kept the political system going, as the emergence of the neo-Nazi National Democrats in the mid-1960s recession was felt to demonstrate.

But such fears were found to be baseless. Workers were both earning more in real terms and could rely on a wide range of social security provisions.

So they felt able to take a fairly relaxed view of the crisis. At least as far as the shipbuilding industry was concerned the state was felt to be capable of and responsible for coping with the difficulties.

The solutions to the crisis as suggested seldom amounted to criticism of the



Shipyard workers on the march against the threat of further redundancies

(Photo: dpa)

German shipowners are ordering new ships from Japan or South Korea.

Smaller and medium-sized German yards have done better, and some have fared well. They include Nobiskrug in Rendsburg, Siemas in Hamburg and Harmsdorf in Flensburg.

In Flensburg the largest workshop in Germany and the most up-to-date in Europe is under construction.

These smaller yards have as a rule specialised and developed technology with which other countries are unable to compete to any great extent.

Only one of the leading companies, Blohm & Voss in Hamburg, has really tried to cater for civil demand other than shipbuilding to any degree.

Blohm & Voss have tried hard to sell off-shore engineering, but otherwise the emphasis has been on military orders, as ever.

Blohm & Voss built the Seydlitz for the Kaiser's navy, the Bismarck for Nazi Germany, and now specialises in tank shells, military containers and frigates for the Argentinians and the Bundesmarine.

This is unlikely to be enough to keep the yard in business, quite apart from the political difficulties that can arise from specialising in military orders.

The situation is so alarming that poli-

ticians have begun to wake up and are eyeing each other with suspicion.

Mayor Koschnick of Bremen has written to Mayor von Dohnanyi of Hamburg, who in his turn has written to Prime Minister Barschel of Schleswig-Holstein, who has just ploughed DM180m into shipbuilding in his state.

The Lower Saxon Economic Affairs Minister, Birgit Breuel, feels that if states go it alone they will run a risk of ruinous competition, outdoing each other in subsidies.

She has invited the others to Hanover for talks, much to the annoyance of Hamburg's Klaus von Dohnanyi as the four northern states were due to confer early this year in any case.

Shipbuilding management and the trade unions are thinking over the future too. Both envisage government subsidies playing a leading role, at least for a transitional period.

But there is no indication of what is to happen after the transition and where the alternatives lie when the steel industry is down in the dumps too.

Redundancies, the unions say, are not the answer. But unless something good happens soon, workers in shipbuilding and allied trades are going to have to continue fearing the worst.

Kursien Plot

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 11 January 1983)

Job security

system. They came mostly in the welfare, but free-market economy, short-term category.

But they were accompanied by a number of strongly authoritarian and nationalist undertones, such as the sentiment that shirkers should be brought to book, foreign workers should be deported and development aid should be scrapped.

It was still generally felt that those who wanted to find a job could do so, so when times were hard all one needed to do was to tighten the belt a notch or two.

Unemployment was not felt to be a serious threat, although everyone realised it could be their turn next and it was always ordinary people who had to bear the brunt.

But strikes were not felt to be of any use in ensuring full order books and continued employment.

Caution is called for, as the authors note. The shipyard crisis was fairly li-

imited, taking place against the background of a mainly healthy economy.

Current difficulties, and still less those that lie ahead, no longer allow of trouble-shooting on such a large scale in an individual instance.

It is no longer true to say that those who want to find work can do so.

But the Göttingen survey enables us to state more precisely the crucial question on the domestic front, which is the extent to which workers will be prepared to make sacrifices to help solve economic problems.

The answer seems to be that workers will be prepared to lend a hand provided the political system proves dependable and makes its contribution too.

Once social safeguards and the welfare state are deliberately subjected to ruthless cuts for the sake of some kind of order the fund of goodwill will soon be exhausted.

In the 1980s the state is unlikely to be able to do much about unemployment, but in the circumstances it holds a grave responsibility for keeping the social peace.

Ludwig von Friedeburg

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 8 January 1983)

Where is Antigone?" asks Ismene. "She couldn't come," she is told. "She has to wait for a maths exam."

Without Antigone Ismene cannot rehearse their scene, so she retires to a corner of the gym and settles down to a chapter of her physics textbook.

Instead of Scene 9 pupils at a Limburg *Gymnasium*, or high school, rehearse Scene 10 of Sophocles' *Antigone*.

Creon, self-assuredly for an 18-year-old, says his piece:

"Compliance, indulgence, leads to anarchy, the worst of all evils. States are dissolved, families break up, ranks of warriors are broken. That is why we must support the man who establishes and maintains order."

Haimon, speaking an unmistakable Hesse dialect, replies:

"That would be the solution if someone were naturally omniscient and always just. But there is no such person. It takes the balanced judgment of many well-meaning people to arrive at a sound viewpoint."

Heinz Böhlen, the school's German teacher, first corrects the broader slips of local dialect then tells everyone to scale down the pathos.

In all other respects he leaves it to the pupils themselves to interpret the parts they play. It is up to them to develop them as rehearsal progress.

The only direct influence he exerts is in discussing with the entire cast the ideas behind the plot: the dangers faced by the state and the relationship between the state and the law.

They suddenly realise how very topical the issues still are.

Very occasionally Dr Böhlen himself acts a short passage. He is no longer a young man, and he is badly disabled, but on stage he bears witness to unsuspected agility.

And despite letting his cast work it out for themselves he is a strict and exacting director.

"The School Theatre," he says, "cannot make do with the more-or-less or the well-meaning. It must develop a high degree of perfection before it faces the public."

"A group that wants to perform a complete dramatic work on the stage cannot be content with boundless enthusiasm; it must be prepared to put in hard work, effort and ability."

Amateur dramatics are part of life at many schools. Several hundred take part in the annual schools theatre festival in West Berlin.

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and Reich, the liberation of spiritual and secular life from church tutelage and the dawning of the Modern Age.

The celebrations commemorating the anniversary of Luther's birth are ecumenically meaningful even in our age; yet it would be out of keeping with this age to put him on a pedestal.

The celebrations of the Lutheran churches in Germany will concentrate on the ecumenical idea.

Even Catholic theologians no longer regard Luther's teachings as an element that divides the churches. This approach was spearheaded by the Catholic ecclesiastical historian Joseph Lortz (1887-1973).

The most important thing will be to promote the ecumenical drive and for the churches to use those of Luther's ideas that remain relevant today in the service of society.

Almut Krüger

(Nordwest-Zeitung, 31 December 1982)

EDUCATION

Life learnt on stage and not just in books

Most productions are by high schools, but there are also entries from other secondary schools and there must be many more.

Schools theatre is currently gaining in popularity, having been neglected for several years until the loss grew glaringly apparent.

Regardless of the trend there have always been schools where amateur theatricals formed part of the curriculum. The Rudolf Steiner schools are but one example.

The Limburg group is an old stager, having been run at the school in its present form for just over 30 years.

There have usually been two productions a year, plus plays read and recitals to music. Members of the cast continually change; there have been over 600 over the years.

This number does not include entire classes that take part in a number of productions, either as extras or as choirs.

But this constant change need not mean that a company has to dispense with continuity in its work.

Many a pupil has embarked on a theatrical career as a 12- or 13-year-old ticket seller, then played walk-on or bit parts, finally to star in a leading role.

Leaving school has not invariably meant curtains. Many an old boy or girl keeps in touch and still takes part in activities, either regularly or occasionally.

This continuity is unthinkable without the support of a hard-working producer in charge of activities over the years.

He must be a teacher who is unperturbed by difficulties of one kind and another. Many a teacher has launched a theatrical group, then given up when difficulties seemed overwhelming.

Headmasters and other members of staff have been known to have little sympathy. Music and art teachers have refused to lend a hand.

There can be trouble with the stage, with costumes and backdrops and with general organisation.

Such problems have not deterred Heinz Böhlen in Limburg. He read literature and drama at university and

wrote his PhD on the comedies of Molière.

Then, 30 years ago, he launched his school theatre group as a young schoolmaster. With energy and perseverance he has kept it going all these years.

The group is well-known in Limburg and even in its French twin town of Sainte-Foy-lès-Lyon. It is an established part of the cultural scene.

Its productions are seen not only by pupils and their parents but also by many local theatre-lovers.

Audiences regularly include state politicians, the burgomaster, the *Landrat* (a local government official) and the bishop.

Some productions have been seen by as many as 2,000 people.

The summer production is usually a comedy, preferably a play suitable for open-air performance against the background of the town's picturesque *Altstadt* or in the castle courtyard near the cathedral.

In spring a more serious play, often laden with contemporary criticism, is performed either at the school or in municipal halls.

The plays that have been put on are too numerous to mention, but playwrights have included Schiller, Kleist, Claudel, Camus, Wilder, Goethe, Brecht, Frisch, Goldoni, Eichendorff, Queneau, Mayakovsky, Tardieu, Marlowe, Ionesco and, at regular intervals, Shakespeare.

Productions have also included work written by the pupils themselves.

Titles are chosen in view of a wide range of criteria. At times events in the news suggest a specific play, such as Camus' *A State of Siege*, after the 1956 Hungarian uprising.

The choice is often made by the cast who are available. Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* was an obvious choice when there were two sets of twins at the school, especially as both were keen to take part.

Not always is the available cast so large as to enable Dr Böhlen to consider putting on, say, Pavel Kohout's *Around the World in 80 Days*.

It is a play with about 90 parts and was finally staged in 1978.

School as seen by students

The debate is conducted over their heads. They are expected to keep quiet and allow themselves to be treated as guinea pigs.

Ordinary everyday lessons no longer seem to interest educational officials and reformers.

Frau Hassio takes a closer look at this aspect, and it is well worth considering.

Her choice of comments, by pupils, teachers and writers, was made without educational intent, but she clearly shows there is unrest at the grass roots.

Little, or no, attention is paid to pupils' personal interests and wishes in

As a matter of principle the play is guided by what young people are capable of doing. Says Dr Böhlen:

"The School Theatre cannot play based on characters and that result from the character's leading role."

As a rule young people can only stereotypes, or at least parts more or less straightforward.

On stage the laws of the theatre strictly enforced. Speech and movement and coordination need full supervision.

Yet the Limburg group has no tions to compete with professional theatre. It does not see itself as a mirror of the professional stage either.

Obviously pupils who are amateur theatricals fancy the idea of becoming actors. But Dr Böhlen's advice is against the idea.

He tells them in no uncertain terms how poor the career prospects are to mention how little money he earned in acting.

Yet a number of his former pupils have gone on to become actors, directors at German theatres or on TV, he proudly admits.

But in principle he suspects would have done so in any case does not really rate their careers in any way due to his work.

Schools theatre, he once wrote in *Festschrift*, is a area alongside art, woodwork and metalwork.

at school, which is normally done with purely cognitive accumulation of knowledge.

The representational arts, be part of lessons at all levels of school or a special subject with artistic dimensions, have an important creative educational part to play.

They can help the individual to freedom from himself. They can help his faculty of creative imagination. They can help him to develop his individuality.

Playing alongside others he is part of a community, learning consideration for and tolerance towards others and develops world topics artistic yardsticks in coming to work with artistic work.

To paraphrase the title of an essay on the German classical dramatist poet Friedrich von Schiller, Dr Böhlen sees the school stage as an educational institution.

Bernd Erich Hepp
(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 5 January 1983)

class. Regarded merely as brains filled, they often have no options other than joyless conformity or defiant rebellion.

Teachers are fast worn out by constant refusal of their pupils to cooperate and often serve as targets for hatred and pent-up aggression.

These are the result of demands for performance and achievement in which the pupils see no point.

Why should they bother when they aren't going to be able to do the job they want? They are worried about exams, especially the final school exam, the *Abitur*.

They are afraid of being dismissed, failures, upset by the problems of puberty or worried they might be pushed for making critical comments.

Frau Hassio's collection of comments makes alarming reading.

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 11 January 1983)

HEALTH

Artificial hand restores 'all but sense of touch'



Artificial limbs have come a long way since Götz von Berlichingen's hand, a marvel of technology 400 years ago and still to be seen at the Museum in Jagst.

People who today have the misfortune to lose a hand don't have to belong to the privileged classes to be fitted with artificial replacement.

They may be lucky enough to get the 'negative' hand, recently presented to the Press by manufacturers Grau Fein-

technik of Böhmekirch. The new device, now ready to go into production, is the result of years of co-

operation with the Aalen Technical College. Like its 400-year-old counterpart in Jagst, the new artificial hand has

five fingers and looks very much like a real hand. What's more, the patient needs very little practice before being able to use it with purely cognitive accumulation of knowledge.

The new adaptive hand, on the other hand, is controlled by electrical impulses transmitted from the brain. It uses the same signals the brain sends to the muscles of natural hands, making them move as required.

The new hand uses electrodes attached to the stump of the arm to pick up signals from the brain.

These signals are then filtered and amplified and used to drive two electric motors in the artificial hand.

An intricate system of pulleys then moves the fingers, making them perform with unprecedented exactitude. It all looks so simple and the result is much like a normal hand, weighing the same and performing the same movements, as to make anybody who has lost a hand wonder why it has only come out in the last few months.

For one, the new hand is based on technologies that were unavailable only a few years ago, and, for another, the hand is much more complicated than generally assumed.

It would take more than 20 built-in motors to reproduce all the movements of a hand. Conventional artificial limbs try to produce only the most simple and essential movements such as grasping, supporting and releasing an object.

But even this is much more complicated than it seems. Take grasping. It is needed is not the grasp of a pincer but a grasp moulded to the shape of the object to be held; firm enough not to drop it while at the same time being gentle enough not to damage

the object and is thus adaptive, as the makers of the new hand call it. The idea of using electrical impulses to control an artificial limb dates back to the 1940s.

The most obvious approach is to use the electric impulses generated by muscle contractions and to pick them up through electrodes.

The strength of the electrical impulses thus generated corresponds to the strength and the speed of the muscle movement.

The main problem to be overcome lay in the fact that the amount of electricity thus produced was minimal and had to be amplified at an enormous rate if it was to be sufficient to drive the motors.

This rate of amplification, unthinkable 35 years ago, has now become reality.

The entire electronic system in the new limb through which the bioelectrical signals are processed and boosted 40,000-fold has been miniaturised to the point where it will fit into the artificial limb together with the two propulsion units.

One of the two motors is used to move the thumb while the other operates the remaining four fingers.

The energy for the electronic system is provided by a set of batteries carried in a belt around the upper arm. Assuming a consumption of 0.45 milliwatts, a set of batteries is good for about five days.

The hand uses the strongest electrical signals to be obtained from the stump to control movement. They are the signals transmitted to the muscles responsible for the movement of the wrist and the pinkie.

Initially, the patient has to make a conscious effort to think of the movement he wants the artificial hand to perform.

Electric shock does not kill instantly

Victims who seem to be dead are still alive and can be saved by instant first aid, though this must be administered within a maximum of three to five minutes.

It is therefore essential that laymen should be able to provide first aid pending the arrival of a doctor. Professor Rudolf Hauf of the Freiburg Research Centre for Electropathology suggested at the 46th Annual Congress in Berlin of the German Society for Emergency Medicine.

Though only one per cent of fatal accidents are due to electric shock, the fatality rate of those involved in such an accident tops the list with seven per cent.

In the Federal Republic of Germany alone there are some 400 fatal electric shock accidents a year. About one-quarter of them occur at home, and of these 15 per cent involve children under the age of nine.

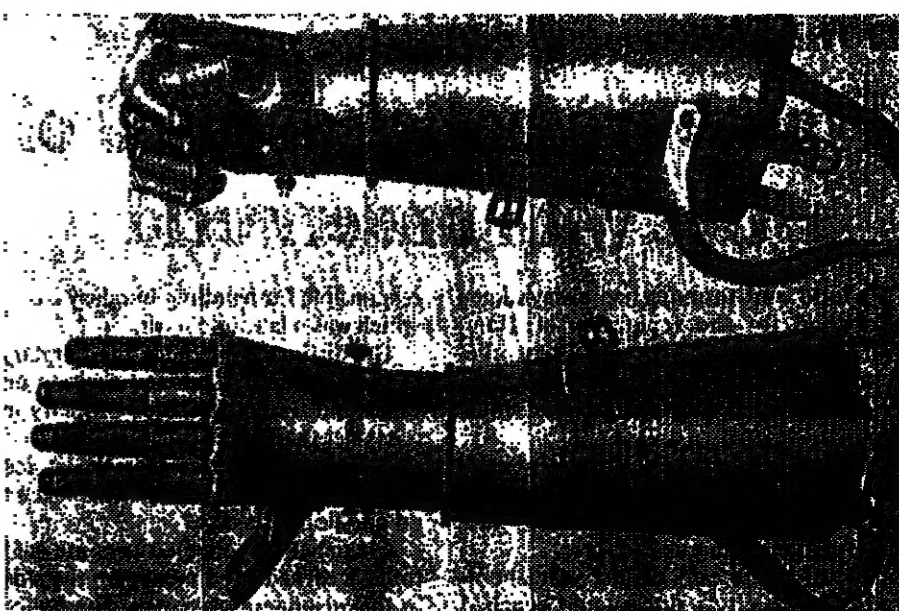
The remaining accidents of this nature occur in industry.

About two-thirds of the fatalities in low-voltage accidents (up to 1,000 volts) die of heart chamber fibrillation and the remaining third of cardiac arrest. Professor Hauf told the congress.

Due to the high ratio of fibrillation, an emergency doctor should be summoned instantly because his equipment invariably includes a defibrillator.

Professor Ernst Baur, of Lyrer, dealt with high voltage accidents where severe burns are the rule.

What matters therefore is a grasp that the object and is thus adaptive, as the makers of the new hand call it. The idea of using electrical impulses to control an artificial limb dates back to the 1940s.



Götz von Berlichingen's 16th century iron hand was manually operated; he used his good hand to move fingers or clench his iron fist.

(Photo: Historia)

But after a relatively short time this becomes so much second nature as to enable him to move the artificial hand spontaneously and naturally. Once this has been learned, there is no need for any further training.

Another important and desirable element is the sense of touch in an artificial hand.

The patient should be aware of the degree of firmness with which he wants the hand to grasp an object because he would otherwise experience only success or failure of a desired movement.

This is one aspect that still has to be perfected.

Experiments now in progress use vibrators that report the firmness and strength of a grip. Another approach is to extend the natural nerves in the stump to the point where they can be led to the artificial fingers.

But this has been unsuccessful so far due to such undesirable side effects as skin irritations. Moreover, the extension of the nerves calls for surgery and always entails the danger that the body will reject foreign matter.

Felix Weber/dl
(Der Tagesspiegel, 8 January 1983)

Electric shock accident rate down

Though the skin might frequently appear unaffected, the muscles through which the electric current flows are frequently "roasted" in such accidents.

Unless this is diagnosed in hospital, Professor Baur said, death can occur three to four days after the accident primarily due to toxic matter that accumulates in the destroyed muscles.

Statistically, the number of electric shock accidents has remained constant these past few years.

Professor Baur interprets this as a good sign considering that the number of electrical appliances in the home and machinery in industry has increased enormously.

He attributed the stagnating accident figures to better accident prevention at home and at work.

Professors Siegfried Borelli, Hans Dingemann (both of Munich) and Stefan Perren (Davos) dealt with allergic reactions to sutures, bandaging, prostheses made of metal, ceramic or plastic plus drugs used in anaesthetics and disinfectants.

Since allergies can lead to fatal shock they suggested that the greatest of care be exercised in emergency wards.

Dieter Dietrich
(Frankfurter Rundschau, 6 January 1983)

Usually, allergies exist before a patient is brought to the emergency ward. In West Germany, for instance, one in ten people suffer from an allergy of one kind or another.

What happens in hospitals is simply that people suffering from chronic allergies suddenly receive an acute allergic shock.

The remedy suggested at the congress was an early diagnosis of allergies in cases of "particularly allergy-prone patients."

This applies particularly to those cases where the accident victim is known to have an allergy (as in cases where this is noted in the ID card).

The four-day congress was attended by more than 900 doctors specialising in a wide variety of fields.

In his closing address, the president of the German Society for Emergency Medicine, Professor Jürgen Probst (Munich), told the congress that the surgeons in charge of emergency wards are increasingly realising the necessity of consulting other specialists (such as urologists, gynaecologists, microsurgeons, internists and allergy experts) in their bid to cope with problem cases.

Even so, the main responsibility rests with the ward surgeon, who has to make on-the-spot decisions. Naturally, this entails the risk of opting for a wrong course of action from the very beginning.

Dieter Dietrich
(Frankfurter Rundschau, 6 January 1983)